

Appl. No. : **10/042,128**
Filed : **January 7, 2002**

REMARKS

Claims 2, 4, 6-8, 10, 12, and 19-21 are pending in this application. Claims 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 12, and 19 have been amended. Claims 1, 3, 9, and 11 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claim 33 had previously been cancelled as drawn to a nonelected invention. Claims 5, 13-18, 22-26, and 34 had previously been cancelled without prejudice. Support for the amendments is found in the specification and claims as filed.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 4 and 12 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 4 and 12 have been rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to Claims 4 and 12 be withdrawn.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1-3, 6-11, and 19-21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by JP 61-192309. Although Applicants do not agree with the propriety of the rejection, Claims 1, 3, 9, and 11 have been cancelled without prejudice, solely to facilitate issuance of otherwise allowable claims. Applicants reserve the ability to pursue the cancelled claims, or similar claims, in one or more continuing patent applications. Claims 2, 6, and 7 have been amended to depend from Claim 4, which has been redrafted into independent form. Claim 8 depends from amended Claim 7. Claims 10 and 19 have been amended to depend from Claim 12, which has been redrafted into independent form. Claims 20 and 21 depend from amended Claim 19. The rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is therefore moot.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 32 and 33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over JP 61-192309 in view of Sunaoka et al. (U.S. 5,151,191). Although Applicants do not agree with the propriety of the rejection, Claims 32 and 33 have been cancelled without prejudice, solely to facilitate issuance of otherwise allowable claims. Applicants reserve the ability to pursue the cancelled claims, or similar claims, in one or more continuing patent applications. The rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is therefore moot.

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Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any remaining concerns which might prevent the prompt allowance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: 3/8/04

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